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The PULPIT

A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

JULY 1945

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Contributed by Readers of THE PULPIT

An Army That Builds

Did you know that at the peak of the modern missionary effort only about 30,000 Protestant missionaries were under appointment over the world? What an insignificant little army compared to the armies of war! Yet the armies of our wars, we know, can never *build* anything. At best they do no more than clear away things that get in the way of genuine building. They clear a site for building. That little missionary army does build something, an amazing something. Jesus compared that something to heaven, an insignificant element apparently but amazing in its possibilites and consequences. A little leaven is introduced into the loaf, and without fanfare of trumpet quietly sets about transforming the whole loaf. Such is Christ's strategy and it is—or should be—the strategy for a new world.

God—and the Nation

God's will for the world, and for our nation, remains unchanged. It is easy to forget in such an hour as this that God's will really means something in history. It is a constant factor amid the most terrifying changes. It stands no matter what else falls. Benjamin Franklin was no starry-eyed dreamer. He once summarized a lifetime's reflections on politics in these words:

"I have lived, sir, a long time. And the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel; our projects will be confounded and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a by-word down to future ages."—*C. Stanley Lowell, Wesley Church, Dover, Md.*

Our Nation's Crime Record

The report of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation, July to August, 1944, shows that the age group, male and female, in which the largest number of arrests occur, is eighteen to twenty-two, with the eighteen-year-old offenders standing first in number. For the first three months of 1944, the increase in arrests at seventeen years of age and under totaled 40.1 per cent. The increase in female arrests in the eighteen-to-twenty group for the same period was 41.4 per cent. The arrests of girls under 21 years of age for drunkenness, vagrancy, disorderly conduct, prostitution and sex crimes in the first half of 1944 increased 89 per cent over the record for 1943. There are in America more than 4,300,000 criminals actively engaged in their business of robbing and murdering. Our national crime bill is $15,000,000,000 every year, or $110.10 for every man, woman and child in the country. The Federal Bureau of Investigation reports a major crime in the United States every 22 seconds throughout the year, or 1,300,000 major crimes in 1944. Eighteen-year-old boys and girls were guilty of committing these crimes more than any other age group.

The following statement by J. Edgar Hoover throws light on our situation—and on the way out: "The American home is still the basis of our social order, and the nation will never be any stronger than the home. The one thing that most juvenile criminals have in common is a lack of proper home training. There is no character-building agency that can take the place of a good home."—*Clarence E. Macartney, First Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.*

Kind of Peace Conference Needed

A short time before his death, the noted American editorial writer, Arthur Brisbane, wrote these words:

"We may sweep the world clean of militarism. We may scrub the world white of autocracy. We may carpet it with democracy, and drape it with the flag of republicanism. We may hang on the walls the thrilling pictures of freedom—here the signing of America's independence, there the thrilling portrait of Joan of Arc, yonder the Magna Carta, and on this side the inspiring picture of Garibaldi. We may spend energy and effort to make the world a Paradise itself, where the lion of capitalism can lie down with the proletarian lamb. But if we turn into that splendid room mankind with the same old heart, 'deceitful and desperately wicked,' we may expect to clean house again n many days hence. What we need a peace conference with the Prin of Peace."

The Last Word

Booker T. Washington, the gre Negro educator, was walking with white friend when a pedestri roughly elbowed him into the gutte The friend was furious and said Washington, "How can you tolera such an insult?" The great man r plied, "I defy any man to make r hate him."

The Christian faith defies all t bitterness of the world—its prejudi its hatred, its cruelty and its sin with its firm convictions that victo belongeth unto the Lord. It m seem as though hate is going have the last word. But that is a li The last belongs to faith, not to fea to love, not to hate; to life, not death.—*Matthew C. Cavell, Fir Presbyterian Church, Evansville, In*

On the Trail of New Sins

We were riding down a road Iowa after a heavy rain had swe the countryside and eroded deep some of the farms. Banks of ri soil had been swept into the dit by the road. Good, black, top s was on its way to the Mississip river. The young Friend riding wi us pointed to those wasted treasur of a good farm and remarked, "Th looks like sin to me." He, too, w an Iowa farmer in the vicinity, a the sight of such waste hurt hi The first reaction to his rema might be a questioning of his use "sin" as a word and a concept. erosion indeed a "sin"? Should n that term be reserved for violatio of the Ten Commandments? Wh happens to our idea of evil if t results of rainstorms are called "sin What kind of theology is this th elicits concern over soil in a ro ditch? . . .

The definitions of social righteou ness and sin are being scrutiniz more fully today. We must discov that not property but human welfa should measure the economy of o nation. A greatly expanded conce of stewardship must be created, a it, in turn, will undergird a ne social order more like the communi of God. To do otherwise is to go piling sin upon sin, and "the wag of sin is death."—*Errol T. Elliott the American Friend.*

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The Pulpit

CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON, *Editor*

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Strength from Heaven

BY EDWARD L. PARSONS

For victory in battle standeth not in the multitude a host but strength is from heaven. 1 Maccabees 19.

THESE WORDS are from the speech of Judas Maccabeus, the heroic leader of a heroic people hen nearly two centuries before the birth of Christ led out his little band of fellow Jews to meet the overwhelming forces of Syria. He met them; he drove them back; he freed Judaea. It is one of the great but often forgotten episodes in the long history of mankind. Judas sums up its meaning in his words: "Victory in battle standeth not in the multitude of an host but strength is from heaven."

Judas is right, but Judas is also wrong. Many a battle is won by the multitude of the host—in these days by all that kes the host effective. Germany sweeping through land, driving through Holland and Belgium and ance; Japan in Manchuria, the Philippines, Burma—is sheer weight of armament and it seems to have its strength very little to do with heaven. Evil es conquer. It wins many a battle. Judas is wrong.

'A THOUSAND YEARS ARE BUT A DAY'

But Judas is right. In the long run, in the long rspective of the years so hard for men to see, in the es of the patient God to whom a thousand years are t a day, the strength of heaven is the last and de-mining factor. There is no final victory for evil. o host is vast enough, no nation powerful enough win and hold its victory save with the strength of aven. The crumbled ruins of Hitler's Germany rce the lesson home on us today. The great power, ether it be Britain or Russia or our own land, can-t escape God. The only strength that counts be-nd the day is the strength from heaven. "The stars their courses fought against Sisera," sang Deborah ree thousand years ago. God lays his hand upon stream of history and his purpose is inescapable. It is a thrilling and exciting thing to watch God rking out his purpose. Again and again the stars their courses do not seem to fight against Sisera; e path of history is strewn with the wrecks of good causes, the obvious defeats of God's purposes; and yet, as the prophets of God have been telling us through the ages, in some way he takes hold of these situations. He works through them. He goes steadily on and on to achieve the kind of world he would have men live in.

Two most obvious illustrations and most illuminating to an understanding of history spring to mind at once. In the sixth century before Christ the hosts of Babylon marched over the deserts and through the hill country and descended upon the little land of Judah. All of Israel that at that time was left to hold safe the oracles of God was overrun. Jerusalem lay in ruins. The best of the people were carried into captivity. It looked as if all that had been brought to men through the great prophets, the poets and the storytellers of Israel was gone irrevocably. But through that dread experience there came a new understanding of God. The Jews learned that he could be worshiped in Babylon or Memphis as well as in Jerusalem; and one great prophetic soul learned that suffering plays its part in the redeeming of God's world. Five centuries before Christ he wrote of the Suffering Servant of the Lord: "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. The chastisement of our peace is upon him."

DEFEAT ON THE CROSS—BUT GOD GOES ON

And that comes to a focus in the great moment of history to which the mind of every Christian turns, the cross on Calvary. Wrecked career, ruined hopes! Evil, prejudice, intolerance, injustice in the saddle! We know all the conventional phrases about it, all the things which Christians have been saying for 1,900 years. I need only remind you of them; for, however conventional, they are true. Jesus goes down in defeat and defeat turns into victory. The cross becomes the hope of the world. Slowly but surely the work of God goes on—in strange ways, with blood and sweat and suffering—but it goes on. He is always taking the hopeless, the unpromising, the evil and making it the means of good.

The great Conference to which the eyes of the world are turned today is an immediate illustration. All through the long ages of man's life on earth he has had one supreme practical problem: the problem of getting along with other men. He has always hoped he could have his own way, choose his own goals, live to and for himself, and he has always succeeded in getting into trouble. There was something in the very nature of things which kept telling him that he could not live to himself, and that he could find a satisfying and, let us say, from his point of view, a free life only in some sort of community. Clan and tribe and small city-state worked. Larger groups worked;

Preached in Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, during the eting of the United Nations Conference on International ganization.

but in spite of the fact that they worked, he found himself still trying to get his own way and to drive others *by force* to accept him and his way. But that way of his never worked very well and always he found himself facing, or more often dodging, that something which told him that the only really free and satisfying life could be found in cooperation in community, in creating ever wider and wider areas of interdependence. The hand of the inescapable God was laid upon him. Little by little, in the misery of war, the bitterness of civil strife or the terror of revolution, God was teaching him the lesson that all nations are one. He was turning defeat into victory as he did on Calvary.

GROPING 'CHILDREN OF GOD'

To be specific: men go groping after this unity of the nations which depends on the fact that they are all children of God. The far-visioned among them tried twenty-five years ago to build in the League of Nations a structure which would express and maintain that unity. But the far-visioned, the Woodrow Wilsons, are too few. The forces of self-interest begin to assert themselves. God faces defeat. God suffers defeat. All the forces of disruption and destruction of pride and defiance of the eternal values of honor and truth and love, break loose. Hitler and that unfortunate tragic comedian Mussolini are only symbols in this great struggle of the principalities, the powers, the world rulers of darkness which rise against the purposes of God. And they are victorious. God is obviously defeated. Chaos and destruction are on every side and only servitude awaits man.

But watch what happens! As honor is thrown to the winds it becomes more precious in the hearts of millions. As ruthlessness and cruelty become rampant on a scale perhaps never before equaled—not even when the Mongol hordes swept over Asia and on into Europe and built their pyramids of skulls—as the horror of it grows men turn to mercy and rediscover the value of human life. As the prospect of servitude looms like some great storm cloud over the horizon freedom takes on a new glory in men's eyes. Marvelous, is it not, that the very movement which threatened to overthrow all men's hard won freedoms has brought throughout the world a cry for freedom which will not be denied. Indeed, if one looks at these vast movements of humanity with eyes opened by the knowledge of God as we know him in Christ Jesus, one sees that the very forces which those leaders of destruction turned against civilization and the eternal values of God were really great folk-strivings for a better life.

'PIOUS PHRASES' ARE SIGNIFICANT

The cynic is forever telling us that the politicians and the statesmen and the diplomats are covering their self-interest by pious phrases, that the pious phrases mean nothing. To them there is no solid reality in these higher spiritual concerns. But the fact is that the pious phrases are witness to the fundamental realities of God, and no ambition is likely to be satisfied unless the ambitious leader brings or at least seems to bring something of the purpose of God into his projects.

But the point I am making is that God does lay his hand upon the destinies of nations as of men. They cannot escape him. Sooner or later he catches up with them. In the long run, naked and helpless and alone stands the human soul or the nation that defies God.

And so to get back. This great Conference in the eyes of the world (using world in the New Testament sense of the secular community) is described in many ways. It is an effort to assure security; it is a coming together of peoples who have been frightened into action by a terrible world upheaval; it is a great power project to assure stability in trade; it is an effort to make the business of getting rich a bit safer; it is on the part of honorable and farsighted men an effort to establish a law-governed world in the place of one governed by jungle ethics, a gathering to safeguard the freedom and independence of the small and weak.

TURNING CALVARIES INTO EASTERS

It is all these things, but it is more. In the eyes of the Christian it is God's work bringing victory out of defeat—turning Calvaries into Easters. It is absorbing to see God at work; to see the prophets who step forward to proclaim his will, and to hear the glad response of the people who hear their voice. I am not growing sentimental. I do not mean for a moment that there are not national and racial and creedal interests which clash, nor would I suggest that every prophet of the Lord who is furthering the will of God is conscious of his role. All unbeknownst to themselves, God uses men. Surely Cyrus the great Persian when in the sixth century before Christ he attacked and destroyed the Babylonian empire, had little notion that somewhere among the small and insignificant peoples with whom he dealt there was a great prophetic soul (still unknown by name to us) who called him God's anointed and as spokesman of God addressed him: "I have called thee by thy name—I have summoned thee though thou hast not known me. I will gird thee though thou hast not known me." Cyrus knew nothing about it; but God was using him laying his hand upon him that he should do his will.

And so in the light of the eternal we who know God in Christ see him using man after man, many who know him not, using them to do his will, to further his purpose and take one more step forward in the long and tortured struggle of man to express in the structure of society the ultimate facts in his relation to God and his fellow men.

The League of Nations failed. The Charter which emerges from this Conference will have many omissions and no doubt need many amendments as the years go on. The unity it expresses may in a later generation come against some obstacle which there is not enough good will to overcome. But the forward step is being taken and we may rejoice as we watch God taking the sins of men, the awful ultimate selfishness and brutal hate and boundless greed of men

hich we are all involved, and working through it to in his ends. We may rejoice to see him turning lvaries into Easters.

GOD WORKS—AND WE WORK WITH HIM

But if it is thrilling to watch God working, it is en more thrilling to share with him in that work. here is a strange and mysterious access of power r those who seek to work with God. Something ok hold of those men whom Judas Maccabeus led the strength of heaven poured into them. And so it always when men know that they are struggling r what they believe is the highest good of the mo- ent, the good which is rooted in the very nature the world. That is of course what we mean by orale. It is not the question of victory, although esumably always the confidence in an approaching ctory builds up morale. It is the faith that there something at stake of more value than mere life. t Stalingrad they fought on and would have fought to death itself because the whole cause of the Holy and of Russia was for the moment concentrated at at point. Whether deepest in the souls of the de- nders was the love of the fatherland, or the belief at God would have them free, or the conviction that e dialectic of the universe supported them, they all lieved that the stars in their courses fought against itler's hosts. It was the destiny not of a small city t of the world which was being fought out at that oment. The victory would not be in the multi- de, in the resistless strength, of the host but in rength from heaven.

Everywhere it is the same story. Whether you are ncerned with the Moslems in the great days of their rly conquests, or the fanatical nazi youth, or the icide squadrons of Japan, the essential factor is me sort of spiritual conviction that what happens them matters to the world. There is profound ith that their strength is from heaven.

TRIUMPHS OF THE EARLY CHURCH

One uses these illustrations from war because life these days is so entangled in war; but the fact ith which we are concerned is even more obvious other ranges of human experience. It was with e certainty that they were fulfilling the purposes of od that the early Christians started out upon their nquest of the world of their day. A few hundred, few thousand, on they went conquering the souls men, bringing them to God, bringing them often persecution and to suffering and death, but always ted and strengthened as they were endued with wer from on high. They might be beaten; they ight die; but they were always victors. You remem- r Paul's triumphant words: "By the armor of right- usness on the right hand and on the left, by glory d dishonor, by evil report and good report; as dying d, behold, we live; as chastened and not killed, as rrowful yet always rejoicing; as poor yet making any rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things." So it is today. The faith in God, the faith that e things which belong to God's purposes are in the end invincible, is what in the last resort gives a man that "unconquerable soul" for which we long. Often in these past weeks men have spoken of the courage, the complete fearlessness of President Roosevelt. He suffered from a dread disease. It left him a cripple; but he faced his fate with courage and won. During the great depression he told us that the only thing to fear was fear. His courage never failed. He made plenty of mistakes, no doubt, for we all do; but he was never defeated by defeat, and we all know his simple faith in God and Jesus Christ and the dignity and worth of men in the sight of God. The victory is really won on Calvary. The ultimate strength is from heaven. In the end God's patience, his unwavering purpose, his truth win. Strength does not lie in the multitude of the host—no, nor in the overwhelming production and vast outpouring of material power.

SUCCESS DEPENDS UPON TRUST

There is no truth which gives us more hope than that today. The great Conference is here to do something which we Christians know is one step forward in realizing the will of God for men. No matter how imperfect is the structure the Conference is building, no matter how uneven is the justice of its provisions—absolute justice cannot be found in this relative world—it is sign and symbol of the ultimate truth of God that men are his family and that he has made all nations one. It is that which gives strength to the purpose of the leaders, whether they know it or not. It is that which, if they do know it, gives them a fine and glowing courage to face the difficulties and problems. It is that which gives to us who have no direct part in it, courage and perseverance, to throw the strength of our prayers behind it, and all the strength of our convictions. We have to meet defeatism and lift it into the glorious light of God's purpose as revealed in Christ. We have to meet cynicism and hidden opposition and selfish interests and put them to flight with the sword of the Spirit.

Most of all we have to meet the studied effort to sow distrust between the great allies. If there is anything more contemptible, more fundamentally seditious than these echoes of Hitler here in the name of American freedom I don't know where it is to be found. The work of the Conference is utterly dependent on trust. Our freedom and the world's freedom are bound up with it. We must warn men of this. We must try to convince them that they can beat God for the moment but they cannot escape him in the end. Fortunate are we if in our weakness and sin we can nevertheless face him with something of the confidence of love.

But, I repeat—we have to keep reminding men again and yet again that they cannot escape God's hand, and that his purpose will be carried out. We have to witness to them the strength, the courage, the power which flow into the souls of men when they open the doors of their souls to the Spirit of God. Many a battle may be won by the multitude of the host: but the only battles that stay won are those in which the host finds its strength in heaven.

On 'Sitting Pretty'

By Edgar DeWitt Jones

And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. Luke 12:19.

IN THE WORDS of a popular American phrase—if ever a man was "sitting pretty," the prosperous person of this parable was that man. He had just about everything, or thought he had: land, bountiful crops, assured position, financial security, a reasonable expectancy of life. Then something happened, something he hadn't reckoned with—he died.

"Sitting pretty." How we dote on the phrase and apply it uniformly to success of a material nature. A young minister is called to a conspicuous pulpit: "He's sitting pretty." A charming girl makes a brilliant marriage: "She's sitting pretty." A citizen is elevated to an important and remunerative position: "He's sitting pretty." A family comes into a sizable legacy: "They're sitting pretty." A political party is strongly entrenched in power and effectively organized: "It's sitting pretty." One would think that life's supreme quest is to "sit pretty."

Now, no sane person would wish to deny to another "moments on the mount"; elation, joy and satisfaction, the fruits of good health, toil and industry. To accomplish a hard task; win honestly a hotly contested game; capture a coveted prize through skill and painstaking preparation—these are occasions for rejoicing. Yet, such experiences are not the best of life, although they may appear to be so. They are temporary gains, producing fleeting emotions, which soon pale, grow dim and disappear in the light of common day.

Those of us who cherish the conceit that the best life has to offer is "sitting pretty" have need to ponder the words of C. S. Lewis, Oxford professor, a clear, courageous thinker, who says: "If you are looking for truth you may find comfort in the end; if you are looking for comfort you will not get either comfort or truth—only soft soap and wishful thinking to begin with, and in the end despair." Does this sound stern and forbidding? Perhaps, but who will gainsay the logic and truth of the statement? Life is like that—must be, if life is real and earnest.

I

Common sense and experience alike tend to explode the belief that anybody can "sit pretty" for long. The facts of life are against the possibility. Nothing is static here; fortunes fluctuate; riches take wings. To have and to hold any desirable thing, place, office means perplexity, perchance disappointment and disillusionment; while accident, illness and death itself crash devastatingly into the prettiest picture, marring it a least for the time. Those who "sit pretty" today ma be prostrate and wretched tomorrow. Life is a moving not a still picture.

Let me be more specific, and begin at the top wit the American presidency, by general agreement th most powerful elective office in the world. Vast powe goes with this high office; immense prestige, worl renown, creature comforts and perquisites of singula charm rainbow the White House with splendor. D our Presidents "sit pretty"? For a brief spell (th honeymoon period, someone has called it) perhaps. Bu not for long. Then what? Ask the shades of Wash ington, Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Cleveland, Wilso and Roosevelt. Interrogate the living presence of Her bert Hoover. The answer is clear: Vicious abuse venemous criticism, base calumny, malicious misrep resentation, insensate and vitriolic hate. These go wit the honors and distinctions of the presidency, and, t a greater or lesser degree, they are educational and dis ciplinary experiences for the occupants of what Lincol called "The Executive Mansion."

In my own memory only one of our President seemed to "sit pretty," and he was Calvin Coolidge less criticized by the press and partisans than any othe of our latter day chief executives. The reason for thi immunity is easily understood. Mr. Coolidge institute no reforms or experiments, and his administration wa ringed about by a prosperity which though unsoun and short-lived was much praised while it lasted. H had the unalloyed support of the vast commercial in terests which when offended can make life miserabl for any President. Even so, there was a strain of wist fulness which permeated Mr. Coolidge's character, a undertone of sadness, and before he died he gave out statement in which he said that he had neither th training nor the understanding to grapple with the nev issues and problems which had emerged and wer clamoring for solution. It is to this conscientious an honest New Englander's credit that underneath hi calm, unruffled exterior and laconic speech, he wasn' "sitting pretty" at all, but instead was profoundly per turbed.

No real man is ever content to sit at ease in Zion Washington, Detroit, or anywhere else in this wid world. What is true of the occupants of high offic and places of awful authority and responsibility, is none theless true of those of us who tread the humble walk of life. The stage of our performance is miniature b comparison, but the experience nonetheless real an exacting. Nobody who is anybody escapes obligations difficult decisions, baffling readjustments, and the aci test in the management of that problem of problems—one's self. Victorious living never was easy, nor coul it ever be thinkingly described as "sitting pretty."

II

Think of a church (if you can) content to "si pretty," proud of its stately edifice, proud of its elo quent preacher, proud of its glorious music, proud o its prestige in the community, and lavishing thought

ts and praise on its pretty little self, while all around ial suffering, racial hostilities and dreadful housing ditions abound. Where is that church's missionary sion and world vision gone? Since when has pretti- s become a synonym of prophecy and smugness an- er term for sacrifice?

Such a church is described in the third chapter of velation. "The angel of the churches" spoke to the odiceans: "I know thy works that thou art neither d nor hot, I would that thou wert cold or hot, so n because thou art lukewarm and neither hot nor d I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou est, I am rich and have gotten riches and have need nothing and knowest not that thou art the wretched , and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked; I nsel thee to buy me gold refined by fire, that thou yest become rich; and white garments that thou yest clothe thyself, and that the shame of thy kedness be not made manifest; and eye salve to oint thy eyes, that thou mayest see." What a astating passage directed to a church content to t pretty" while the world rocks and writhes in tribu- on!

One of our great missionary leaders in America used say that some churches he knew reminded him of parrot preening itself and saying over and over in: "Pretty Pol; pretty Pol; pretty Pol." A really ristian church should spend no more on itself than pends for missions and benevolences. Of how many our churches is this true? A slender minority, alas! reely ye have received, freely give." And we have en so little for the furtherance of the gospel!

No religious body, denomination, communion, be it sbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, Epis- , Disciples, can justify its existence merely by sitting nfortably where the past has left or lodged it—not n the Roman Catholics, although that august and verful body is confessedly a conservator of tradition. e only way we can be true to the heritage of the t is to relate it to the present and apply it to condi- ns our fathers knew nothing of nor dreamed the sibility. Truth cannot be deposited like jewels in a lt for safe keeping. The man in the parable who his talent in the earth and thought himself "sitting tty" had a rude awakening! I believe it was Wen- l Phillips who said: "To be as good as our fathers have to be better. To do as much as they did we ll have to do more. To see as far as they saw we ll have to see further."

New occasions teach new duties;
Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward,
Who would keep abreast of Truth;
Lo! before us gleam her campfires,
We ourselves must Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly
Through the desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal
With the Past's blood-rusted key.

Halford E. Luccock, who always writes with sparkle l fine effect, has this to say in his scintillating book, *the Minister's Workshop:* "A line of thought which has often been raised with productive results opens out from the question: 'Suppose the church after Pentecost had shown the same spirit and followed the same conduct as many churches today, what would have happened?' That is, suppose complacency had prevailed instead of an outgoing missionary passion. Suppose the members had said: 'We're sitting pretty. We have the most eloquent preacher in the city and three thousand conversions. Not bad; not bad at all. All we need is to put the finances on a firm basis, forget this extravagant nonsense about Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth.' What would have happened? We do not need to guess. We know. The church at Jerusalem did just that a generation later. It died. The Christian church was saved by its outgoing evangelistic and missionary passion. As it was in the beginning it is now."* Truer words, more potent words, were never written. Churches that are satisfied to "sit pretty" soon become positively ugly.

A correspondent of the *Christian Century,* writing from New Guinea in February of this year, tells of a group of service men who met with the post chaplain to discuss the case of religion after the war. The service men certainly spoke their minds. Said one: "The people in our Protestant churches are lined up automatically in their political decisions against the poor and the industrial workers." Said another: "Why has it been that in the past the church has often stood out against movements that would better the conditions of the common people? The church has taken sides with the well-to-do, the landowners, rather than supporting the demands of the common people for justice and equality."

"Not pleasant to hear," you say? Granted, but we need to hear it no matter how unpleasant and disturbing it is to our ears and our consciences. Only those who cannot comfortably "sit pretty" are on the side of the angels.

III

No nation can "sit pretty" and long endure. History is hot with the burning records of the peoples who tried it and went down to doom: Jerusalem, Babylon, Egypt, Rome, Athens, Napoleon's France, Mussolini's Italy, Hitler's Germany—the list is long and bloody. For no nation liveth to itself or dieth to itself. A modern author calls nationalism a parasite on the body of Christ. For one God and Father of us all and one world, this world, Christ died on Calvary. Woe to that nation coming victorious from this bloody war with secret ambitions to "sit pretty" after the peace is made, with an eye single to strategic commercial policies quite regardless of the claims of the little nations and the little people! Right here is the place to ponder the words of a returned soldier who bared his mind and heart in an article which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* of January 1944. Let us hear from the men "over there." Some of them are back, invalided, wounded and in process of being patched up in hospitals. This returned soldier has something to say which we all have need to hear and to heed:

*Quotation used by permission Abingdon-Cokesbury Press.

So when someone asks me how it feels to be home, it is in the light of postwar problems that I try to answer. I came home eager to discover how much public support stood behind the promises that sounded so encouraging while I was on the seas. I wanted to learn what plans the average citizen had for collective security after the war. I have found a general feeling that some sort of "League of Nations with teeth in it" should be established after the war. This is encouraging. So is the new neighborliness I have mentioned. Offsetting these heartening changes, is a host of ominous fears—the mercantile, profit-seeking suspicion brought back by the five Senators; the whispering campaign against the Russians, our supposed enemy in a war to follow this one; the distrust over whether our allies are contributing a fair share; the lack of confidence in anything but force as a means of maintaining the peace; the ever-increasing resentment toward any measure good or bad that the Administration proposes.

Thus a returned soldier speaks not for himself alone but for millions like him. O Bankers, Statesmen, Preachers, Labor Leaders, Captains of Industry—all of us—do not belittle or despise this voice from the bloody battlefront. This is a voice from one who has known at first hand the hell of fire and filth, discomfort and hardships of the men, mostly young, who are hazarding their all to liberate enslaved peoples and make sure that our heritage of freedom is taken not away from us. For one, I am ashamed of even the slightest complaint I have ever made because of restrictions, discomforts, inconveniences, taxes—anything that belongs to this war effort here at home. At their worst, they are as nothing compared with what the embattled men see, know and suffer.

"Sitting pretty"—I hope never to use the phrase save in jest. The teachings of Christ and the heroic company that gave us Christianity are everlastingly opposed to the easy, selfish way of life. They pitched their principles high and laid their lives low for a lost world found and redeemed through Christ, the Savior. Deep down all of us know that nothing is so dear as a conscience void of guilt, a sense of being in league with the Lord of Hosts and with the Great Hearts of all times who "healed sick hearts till theirs were broken, dried sad eyes till theirs lost sight." They forsooth were of that glorious company of Unconquerables who followed in Christ's train and knew both heights and depths.

Who has known heights and depths shall not again
Know peace—not as the calm heart knows
Low ivied walls; a garden close,
The old enchantments of a rose.
And though he tread the humble ways of men,
He shall not speak the common tongue again.
Who has known heights shall bear forevermore
An incommunicable thing
That hurts his heart, as if a wing
Beat at the portal, challenging:
And yet—lured by the gleam his vision wore—
Who once has trodden stars seeks peace no more.

"Sitting pretty"? No, *standing* and battling boldly for the right against the wrong. "Sitting pretty"? No, *contending* for the true against the false. "Sitting pretty"? No, *leaping* to the barricades where justice is sorely pressed and in need of friends. "Sitting pretty"? No, *plunging* into the thick of the fray, where th conflict is fiercest and victory for righteousness tremble in the balance. "Sitting pretty"? No, *stooping* to lif up "him who shall have borne the battle, and to car for his widow and his orphan—to do all which ma achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace amon ourselves and with all nations." "Sitting pretty"? No

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat.
Oh! be swift, my soul, to answer Him, be jubilant, my feet . . .

"Sitting pretty"? Perish the sardonic phrase. Fo the cry is "Onward" not "Backward," "Christian so diers," and those who are content to mark time ar out of step with the Unconquerables.

The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar;
Who follows in his train?

Who best can drink his cup of woe,
Triumphant over pain,
Who patient bears his cross below,
He follows in his train.

Christianity—and America

CHRISTIANITY, as Jesus taught it, not in the articl of a creed but in the principles of life, means gentl generous and self-forgetting relations between indivi ual men, justice between groups and classes of me a righteous social order, equal enjoyment of the re sources of nature and the privileges of state, a fre fellowship of love, joy, peace, and the universal brothe hood of man. All of these concepts of the Christia life are wantonly violated by the events of every da here in America, and, what is infinitely worse, by th whole character of the economic and social structure o our American society. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

HE does most to Christianize the world, and t hasten the coming of the Kingdom, who does most t make thoroughly Christian the United States.
JOSIAH STRONG.

DEMOCRACY is nothing but the political name for th ideals which Christianity brought into the world a religion. THOMAS MANN.

THIS country appears to be the last effort of Divin Providence in behalf of the human race.
RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

AMERICA is afflicted with the bad citizenship of goo men. GEORGE W. TRUITT.

OUR patriotism is a patriotism of partnership.
G. C. STEWART.

Behold I Thought . . . Now I Know'

By William Henry Denney

"Some men, in their need, contemplate the ma-ian , . . and find instead . . . the Hand of God . . . d Destiny!"

THERE are two kinds of people in this world, and it is important to know which one of them is the ovince of your life. The majority are what we may ll the "little magicians." They are the people of ifting, uncertain, complex and particular and mani-fold opinions. They live and struggle with nothing more than their limited personal resources. They discover sooner than they know that life runs out of "tricks" to meet the bewildering issues of self, of good and evil, and of the vast immensities of their world. The exterior powers are too demanding, the sins of human nature too deep, the sorrows too full, the struggles too hard—yes, even the joys of life too abounding in lfishness for us mortals to make life a victory on our vn ingenuities. These are the people who say, "I ink," and one often suspects that thinking has come a short stop in themselves.

So the "little magicians" demand that their leaders all also be magicians. They expect their leaders to brilliant enough to think, plan, organize and achieve to be charming enough to get under the skins of all rts and conditions of people, and weld them into nity of purpose and action. In St. Paul's word, they ten expect them to be "all things to all men," hether or not the "little magicians" themselves have ny heart, vision or action together in the common use.

This common expectation that leaders in state, urch, education and business shall be magicians is e reason why men of destiny arise in the world. Out the plan and purpose of God, the men of destiny me to re-establish foundations and project the living sues of the present, and the shape of things to come, cause the "little magicians" run out of tricks.

Thus the dynamic minority in humanity is the peo-le of destiny. Some place, and hence for all time, ey feel the hand of God in the present and discern e finger of God pointing the future. They have a w mighty convictions—"borne in upon them," as the uakers say! At some point in life, they felt the dead-end street" of the "little magician" who tried play God in his own way. The Hand of One who more than the sum of their senses touched them ith an impact that never lets them go. Quietly, mbly and resolutely such men say, "I know," and hat they "know" makes a radical difference in them, nd in their world.

We are living in one of history's most revealing hours. We will "catch" what the hour has to tell on one condition. Are we living as "little magicians," or will we be emotionally, mentally and willfully baptized in the stream of God's grace in Christ Jesus until we know our destiny—the impact of God's hand upon us, the finger that traces the unknown future? Let us therefore "choose this day, whom we shall serve"!

There was a man whose name was Naaman. In a real sense Naaman is everyman. Naaman sought a magician to heal him, and he found the hand of God.

Now Naaman was as "natural" as all of us, and his setting in life dramatizes us to ourselves. His Damascus was a Paris. He arranged life about himself, and he thought that he could command all situations. His time was change and war. The cavalcade of life was of pomp and circumstance and military victories. In such times "truth may be abolished for a lack of time."

NAAMAN, 'A VERY MODERN FELLOW'

Naaman lived in a time of recurrent thrills. People were drunk with barbaric splendors, blinded by their own sun, and their nostrils were filled with the odor of incense and sandalwood. They wanted no other destiny than the couched refinements and indulgences of a self-satiated life.

Naaman was not a bad man by the standards of his time. He was "grand seigneur" enough to be popular, and "good fellow" enough to be accepted everywhere, and that is all that convention required him to be. He was kindly, humane, generous and flamboyant. He is a very modern fellow—this Naaman.

Now Naaman has a religion—a very modern religion—a religion without God. It is the religion of Baal Rimmon. It is the worship of the forces of nature above man, about man and in man. It is the most daring and advanced form of common earthiness masquerading as religion. Mother Nature without Father God is the most alluring of all deities. She makes everything appear beautiful and good. She has ease because she does not trouble us with conscience, and under her we can all "let nature be our guide," and society will have no complexes, no frustrations and no bondages—but don't bank on it!

This ancient-modern religion of naturalistic secularism is founded on wealth, pride, superstition. To it, God is what you have. Pride is that cocksureness that nature can tell you what you need to know. The superstition is that you can get what you can pay for, whether it is a personal healing or conquering a country.

WHEN LIFE RUNS OUT

But Naaman knew that life was, as we say today, "shot through with holes"—he was a leper. Life had a terrible void, a dreadful frustration—a very real deadening force. It was running down and it was running out.

Now what did Naaman think?

He did not like the idea of going to Elisha the prophet of Israel to be healed. He looked upon the

whole tribe of Israel as being inferior, uncouth and uncultured. He was a sophisticated man of the world. The hearsay about the tribal God of Israel was too simple, too demanding and too directly articulate for this man.

You see, Naaman was trained to think that life is as you order it. He would look up the medicine man Elisha. Let him call upon his god, say the necessary magic, pay the bill in gold and silver and raiment, and go home.

Naaman did not like the command to wash in the river Jordan—muddy little stream. "Are not the beautiful rivers of Abana and Pharpar good enough!"

But immersed in the river Jordan, he was caught in the stream of God's life and grace. Elisha refused the payment of the treasure. Elisha was full of some unearthly treasure. Naaman felt the hand of God. He stood upon a new earth—an earth thrust through with a purpose and destiny he had never known before.

NAAMAN—AND WE

Most of us human creatures are like Naaman. We think life by our inheritance, our education, our popular opinions, our conscious or unconscious acceptations, and by the temper of our times. So often "we get stuck with ourselves"; we are imprisoned and bound and lost—we are debarred from life's possible healings, its real redemptions, its richest opportunities, its deepest joys.

So often we think that the whole story is the patchwork of our observable facts. We believe what we are determined to believe. Human desire weaves a mist of heated atmosphere about our minds. We trust in systems of logic rather than the full impact of the Spirit, when we are big enough to wrestle with the Spirit until the last vestige of self is lost and found again in the power of God. We are no longer free agents for the life and power of God. We cling to a little life situation instead of throwing our lives into the stream of God's grace and destiny, knowing that, come what may, his hand will trace the unknown future.

In the Jordan stream of God's grace Naaman felt his broken flesh, and lo! it was like the flesh of a child again. Life was filled with a new vitality under the impact of the hand of God.

I have talked with several chaplains of the armed forces and have culled from some of them this: "Out there in the flare of things men are thrown back upon God himself, upon the knowledge of God in Christ—on the simple facts that can redeem men from all fear and sin and hell, on the knowledge of eternity touching life in time; this drives itself into those who find themselves in some Jordan where the hand of God is felt—and they are released from all the old habitudes of thought into the amazing power of their new knowledge."

WHAT HUMANITY NEEDS TODAY

Above all, it is God-centered life and thought and action that we need today. It is the reconciling knowledge of God in Christ that redeems the mass of conflicting opinions into a new awareness of selfless love truth, goodness and justice that can get under th skin of humanity, and can make it whole and make i united.

But we have to step deep into some real Jordan! W have to turn over our shames as well as our greatnes to the hand of God. We have to hurl our weaknes into the stream of God's grace so that he can mak it a strength. We have to fling in our bewilderment as well as our fashionable opinions. The "practice o the presence," the strength of God-bound people t which we belong—the sacramental obedience and th prayer that is a constant momentary thrust of con sciousness, *and you and I will know—for in that w cannot help but know.*

In the waters of Warm Springs, Georgia, a bril liant, trained Captain immersed his broken life, an found the hand of God and henceforth saw the finge of God pointing the unknown future.

The day of opinion is over. The hour cries out fo the knowledge, experience and destiny of the Livin God in every life. Carl Sandburg said of Lincoln "You cannot measure a tree until it is down"—an the dimensions of this man are beyond our yet short sighted reckoning, and will be for years to come.

No man is indispensable, but some men "come t the Kingdom for such a time as this"! These thing we know.

A MESSAGE THE WORLD NEEDED

He inspired the world in our time to fight for th common life of all men, and he told them to begin a the bottom of the ladder. Franklin Delano Roosevel started the redemption of free democracy from th unnecessary chains of royalist-capitalism. He refocuse before men's eyes the fact that "each must be for all and all must work for each." He heralded to th world what Lincoln made articulate to the nation, tha life itself will not tolerate a world "half slave an half free."

He took charge of a chaotic and almost bankrup house and mortgaged that house, so that future gener ations might have the house, and that it might belon to all, not to the privileged few.

In the "good neighbor policy" he made articulat that power (and great powers) is the servant and no the dominating role for the common life of mankind He gradually withdrew American exploitation in othe countries, so that America's mission might be believe with confidence and dignity. He made us think i billions because the world is made up of billions, bu he forbade us to lose sight of the one. He inspire the common solidarity of all mankind in the love o God. He made America see that "what you give awa you have forever." He gave us a mission to the en slaved, the destitute and the broken, so that we ma perchance be saved in saving them.

He made the American presidency a leadership an not a demagoguery. He inspired, quickened and awak ened every department of government. He restored th American mind to the foundations of its heritage before the royalist-capitalistic system paralyzed the fre

wers of the church, the state and economic life. He ualized society without giving us socialism, and he vealed the satanic nature of our foes and the coming r long before the people had the vision to know it. : welded the most diverse allies into a unity, and he ed the perspectives of our future.

A LOVER OF MANKIND

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a man and leader th (the Bible uses stronger words) spiritual guts. hen other men were paralyzed in provincial thoughts, acted by what knowledge he had. "Do it perfectly you can, but for God's sake get it done!" was his otto. Force he had where men lagged, chiding for narrow wild actions and reactions of men, but ways a lover of mankind!

When it rained on the second inauguration day, d people wondered about inside ceremonies, he said: f they can take it, I can too." He gave his life in at manner, and every man at the front knows it. ntil history produces a man to match him, it will ite it down that our greatest American has been a ing sacrifice on the altar of faith and freedom.

There is a Jordan for us all, where our life may be mersed in the stream of God's Eternal Grace—here the "little magicians" become the people of stiny under the hand of God.

"We have nothing to fear, but fear"—never confess fear, confess only your faith—and God give you no ace until you get to that Jordan of spiritual conlousness that is a mighty destiny for you and for your orld. Begin in the God-bound human life of the urch, where the "teachable-meek" live, and learn at e bottom of the ladder. Rest not until you can say ith St. Paul: "I know Him on whom I have beeved, and am persuaded that He is able to keep all at I have committed unto Him against that day."

My friends, "it is a terrible thing to fall into the nd of the Living God." But it is all-wonderful cause—it is getting yourself off your own hands; id it is getting this bleeding world, all shot through ith holes, out of the hands of blind fate and tragic rcumstance—and self-centered men!

"I know Him"—let every thought be captive to at knowledge—and the world may yet be filled with e strong, sweet reasonableness of the Living God.

It is sobering to think that a man may preach for a fetime with fair outward success without either an discreet and unyielding antagonism to the powerful vils which maim and strangle lives, and without real eligion, getting along with a flow of moral chatter as substitute. HALFORD E. LUCCOCK.

FREEDOM is not a catalogue of political rights. It is thing of the spirit. HERBERT HOOVER.

No nation is better than the individuals that compose . CORDELL HULL.

What Christians Can Do Now

BY NORRIS L. TIBBETTS

The labourers were armed; each of them worked with one hand, and held a weapon in the other. The masons were each girded with a sword as they built. Nehemiah 4:17-18.

WE ARE LIVING in an age of unparalleled destruction. Nothing like this has ever been on the earth before. East and west the works of civilization have been going down. After five years and more of war the once great city of Warsaw has scarcely a building which does not show the scars of battle. In London, acres of rubble now replace the homes and offices where men and women once lived and worked. We have seen total war and the nations have been burning up with the fever of it, while their citizens were organized, voluntarily or involuntarily, to take some part in this terrible business.

The demands of total war seem to have claimed our total attention. As armaments increased, civilian requirements have been neglected. Concentration on the task in hand has been exacted of us by government decree and by public opinion. Though black markets exist and those who patronize them boast among themselves of their pitiful successes, their practices take place in the dark because they cannot stand the light of public scrutiny. What has not promoted the war effort directly has been subject to review if not indeed to condemnation. The consensus of judgment has clearly been that we have just one thing to do.

RELIGION IN WARTIME

The citizen who is also a Christian cannot, however, escape the demands of his religion even in a period of total war. That those demands have been differently interpreted is to be expected after centuries of training during which men and women have learned that it is right to follow the dictates of conscience as these are prompted by their interpretation of the will of God. That those demands, as they were once understood, have been discarded in their entirety for the duration of the war, some erstwhile Christians have announced. We may not question the sincerity of their decision as they faced the deep and inescapable conflicts which war presents to the Christian, but we may question their wisdom when we contemplate, as now we must, what a similar wholesale renunciation of Christianity has allowed some among our enemies to do.

I shall never cease to be grateful for and greatly reassured by the statement of a young man who had

been reared in a Christian home and taught in the ways of peace who said that he believed this background made him a better soldier. I venture to believe that while his Christianity made it harder for him to fight and kill, his religion kept before him what he is fighting for. While we may reasonably doubt that a total rejection of Christianity will make a man a better soldier, we have no reason to doubt that this will leave him a poor maker of the peace. Too long neglected, the skills of Christian living cannot be easily recovered.

TOTAL WAR—AND CHRISTIANITY

The dilemma which we face with the demands of total war on one side and the demands of Christianity on the other is not beyond the pale of some solution. To believe otherwise would be to eject God from our own lives, and, by implication, from the life of this world. It is inconceivable that even during a total war, this heinous evil should have the only and the final word for us. It is equally inconceivable that Christianity can function with absolute perfection and with full freedom in a world where so much evil is. Either assumption disregards the indisputable fact that in all situations where human beings are involved the forces of good and evil are in conflict, sometimes on the battlefield of one's own soul, and sometimes on the bomb-pocked earth of continents. Indeed our acknowledgment of this struggle between good and evil on any scale whatsoever is a first step in resolving the dilemma. We believe that we are organizing our strength to defend the good against the power of aggressive evil. This good that we defend we have described in various ways, but often in terms of freedom. But now suppose our involvement in defense causes us completely to neglect until it disappears from the human scene the freedom we are defending. Then our defense is thrown around a vacuum, and when the war is over, we shall have nothing left. Through our war efforts we must defend what is worth defending, but through our Christianity we must preserve and develop what is worthy of so much sacrifice. The people who only go to war have but one job to do. The Christian who is involved in war has two—the one, destruction of the evil—the other, creation of the good. The first is meaningless without the second.

NEHEMIAH THE BUILDER

The situation in which we find ourselves is not new in human experience. Approximately in the year 445 B.C. a man named Nehemiah lived in Persia. Although he was an exiled Jew, he held a position of considerable consequence in the court of king Artaxerxes. He was a man of ability and he was rich, but he was dissatisfied, for his heart was in his homeland.

In due time and at his own request, Nehemiah was permitted to return to Jerusalem to attempt to bring order out of chaos and a fair city out of ruins. The task was great enough without the complicating hostility of neighboring peoples. Plainly the first stage in the reconstruction of Jerusalem was to protect its territory and its inhabitants against their enemies. Nehemiah organized his fellow countrymen as laborers to rebuild the city's fallen walls. We need not concern ourselves with the false accusations and the difficulties which the hostile neighbors interposed to halt the work. But we shall pause to consider the more crucial situation which was created when these enemies assembled with their weapons to attack the people whom their threats could not delay. Here the familiar dilemma was presented to Nehemiah. Should the people take their arms and fight, or should they build the city's half completed walls? Here was his solution. "The labourers were armed; each of them worked with one hand, and held a weapon in the other. The masons were each girded with a sword as they built." Good for Nehemiah! He knew how to face the common enemy. Let one hand be for defense and the other for development! That is a pattern for the ages. Thank God, even in wartime, there is something that Christians can do!

CREATION AMID DESTRUCTION

But someone is sure to say that as one swallow does not make a summer, so Nehemiah's admirable example was on too restricted a basis for us to rest our present practice on it. After all, are we not in a total war? But to such objections we may reply that all these things are relative. The greater the attack, the greater must be the defense, but the power of the defense will be in direct ratio to the strength at the center. Are we not attempting to weaken our enemies by undermining their confidence in their leaders and by contradicting their conceptions of what is good? How gladly would they learn that our strength is only the resistance of an outer shell! It is essential, therefore, to realize as Christians that the process of creation is forever going on amid man's works of destruction.

Sometimes history makes this plain, as Professor Latourette of Yale has shown us, when he brings into contrasting relationship the events of single years. The year 1792, he reminds us, was marked by the Reign of Terror in Paris, but in that same year the Baptist Missionary Society was organized in England, growing out of the work of William Carey. In 1804, when Napoleon more seriously threatened England with invasion than at any time between the Spanish Armada and the nazi attempt in 1940, the British and Foreign Bible Society was organized. In 1812, while American ports were being blockaded by the British, the first party of American missionaries, of which Adoniram Judson was a member, sailed for India. Chained to the chariot wheels of local events, few of the earth's population could see the cosmic process in its sweeping operations. But now, in the long perspective of history, we see that as some men carried their weapons of destruction, others were wielding their building tools.

'THE BEST THINGS IN THE WORST TIMES'

Even in secluded places this thing has happened. Lord Halifax, speaking once in the House of Lords told some years ago about an English country church which carries an inscription to its builder from the

ne, three hundred years ago, when England was torn civil war. This inscription reads: "In the year 43, when all things sacred were either demolished profaned, this church was built by one whose singu- praise it is to have done the best things in the worst nes, and to have helped them in the most calami- us."

FAITH OF A SOLDIER

Nor have the insights of men been entirely frus- ated by the dark curtain of this present war. A ung sergeant wrote to his father from somewhere India: "The other day I ran across . . . the state- ent of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'Religion is believing hat the centuries say against the hours.' To me it ems a rather timely idea—the hours are saying we ust hate and destroy and kill—the centuries are say- g that each individual is a personality of dignity and orth. The hours are saying that Christian higher ducation is doomed, but the centuries say its largest hievements lie ahead. . . ."

That is right, soldier, and we thank you for re- inding us. There is a power in this universe that ilds and builds, defending the good against the evil the creation of more good. And when Christ's emies took a wooden cross to work their evil will, is power through him turned their weapon of de- ruction into a building tool that ever since has shaped e life of the world. The centuries say that the eative process in this universe is still going on.

With our lives thus set in this supporting structure, e pattern for the Christian is clear. While the con- tions of his earthly existence now impose upon him emingly the terrible necessity of war's destructive- ss, his commitments to the God and Father of our ord Jesus Christ require him at the same time and all possible points to build the good. With a weapon one hand, he must always have a building tool in e other. The Red Cross, the United Nations Re- ef and Rehabilitation Administration and all the rest the reconstruction forces are no accidents of nature!

MAINTAINING FAITH IN GOD

First of all, then, in a time of war, we can build our faith in God. Lest this undertaking appear be impractical and remote, let us see how concrete nd relevant it is in our present situation. Take as ndamental a matter as our treatment of persons. What will determine our actions? Our faith in God hich means for Christians that all human beings ossess both dignity and worth! The implications of is faith are more or less accepted in our congenial eighborhoods, but they appear plainly where war rains human relations to the breaking point. Yet uring the American Revolution a group of Conti- ental soldiers was marching east across Massachu- tts after a victorious encounter with the British. hey had prisoners. In Esther Forbes' biography of aul Revere we read that a British captive wrote: Some of the (American) officers who accompanied s had been shoemakers. On our halts they would ake boots for our officers and sometimes they mended e shoes of our men." Those were days when a stern religion gave to its adherents a vital faith in God and at least a measure of respect for their fellow men.

Now turn to the present scene. In the advance of the nazi armies into Belgium, suffering and death were inflicted and received as an inevitable part of war. Prisoners were taken by both sides. In monstrous defiance of the laws of war and of humanity, certain nazis shot their prisoners and took the shoes from off their feet. Such horrible crimes men will continue to commit as long as they lack a faith in God which gives worth to human life. War is a terrible thing, but it would be yet more terrible if we should all lose our faith in God and, inoculated with the nazi virus, should learn to cut down like trees all those who stand between us and the attainment of our personal desires. While we hold our weapons in one hand, let us, therefore, build unfalteringly our faith in God with the other.

STILL, WE CAN BUILD CHARACTER

In the next place, in a time of war, we can build character. Of course this cannot be done apart from our faith in God. So the Christian must bring his faith and his conduct together. Our first tendency in considering this matter might be to contemplate the isolated things which we and others do. These are of course important, and like the stones that are laid one upon the other, they are the stuff of which a character is ultimately made. But there is a prior consideration which must be recognized, namely: What is it that determines what we do? Our answer to this question will decide the quality of the character we build.

We are so made, for one thing, that our concentration on ourselves can determine what we do. This tendency in us the war can accentuate. Anxiety about those we love who are away can make us irritable with those we love who are at home. Sorrow, when it comes, can make us hard and bitter when we think about ourselves. All too easily we may form the habit of asking what this war is doing to us. There used to be a rough-and-tumble sport in which one man in a compact circle of his fellows was pushed helplessly from side to side. He could not control himself. So the self may feel that on a gigantic scale the war is pushing it about. The conduct which results from this attitude toward life's events will make a character but it will not be good. As Eugene W. Lyman has written, in his *Religion and the Issues of Life:* "Self-centeredness is the most universal source of moral defeat, because it disqualifies us from living with our fellow men as members of one another. In whatever form it takes root—whether that of self-gratification, or making a fortune or a name for oneself, or of self-protection against risks and dangers—self-centeredness renders us insensitive to the hopes and aspirations of others, indifferent and callous to their needs, and when the pinch comes, ruthless in overriding them to gain our own ends."

Strange as it may seem, our concentration on the enemy can likewise determine what we do. He can set our standards, and from experience we know that they will be low. Very well, then, shall we allow ourselves to go to his depths and by an equal baseness

of conduct to become like him? There is indeed that danger. We cannot safely ignore it lest in passion we do what in later, saner moments we shall live eternally to regret. Our answer to this pressing question comes today not from the theories of those who view the contemporary scene with emotional detachment, but from a man whose V-mail letter came to me from New Guinea. He seems to have in his mind too the importance of the building tool even as he carries his weapons.

LESS HATE IN THE JUNGLE

Thinking of the weapons, this man writes: "There is less hate here among the jungle fighting men than in the States because they simply combat Japanese evils with evils. What our enemy does we can do. Let's beat them to it even." Thus far the soldier is speaking to us. But he goes on: "One asked, 'Should any foe of mine determine my conduct?' Our Master answered that long ago." Thus speaks the Christian in him. In the steaming jungles of the south Pacific islands or in other war zones, wherever men think and act like that, the enemy may take away their lives, but they cannot touch their characters. Surely we at home should build our characters to match the best that our fighting men bring back.

From the pattern supplied by the self, or by the enemy, the Christian turns to the pattern supplied by God. I mean to say, as J. H. Oldham has pointed out, that we are living in a universe in which there is for persons a standard of moral right as there is for material things a physical law, and to this standard of right, which is above the individual's or the nation's standard of the present, the Christian must be "unconditionally loyal." The alternative is chaos, such as we now have in many phases of our contemporary life, which parallels the period in Hebrew history concerning which we read, "In those days there was no king in Israel, and everyone did exactly as he pleased." This social situation is not hard to visualize. No unifying force, no strong personality, no guiding will, no recognized law claimed the allegiance of the people. No wonder there was confusion. No wonder that under these conditions the conduct of men varies so widely and brings conflict. No wonder that the nations still look askance at each other even when they are allies. Acknowledging no standard of right that is superior to their own wills, each, like the people of Israel before they became a nation, will probably do exactly as it pleases. The Christian faith in a righteous, just and loving God is more than a personal convenience. It is a political necessity on a world-wide scale.

CHARACTER ON THE BATTLEFIELD

The recognition of this ultimate standard of right is basic to the Christian life. We do not do as we please, nor as the enemy pleases, but as God pleases. Out of this unconditional loyalty Christian character grows. When this loyalty is maintained, character may grow in most unlikely places. And since the future welfare of this earth and all its people depends on a union of all those who share this common loyalty, I venture to give you an example of it as the *New York Times* on August 8, 1944, reported it from Germany. In that largely degenerate country whose most pronounced policy has been to do exactly as it pleases and to require its citizens to acknowledge no higher loyalty than they give to the state, a document was issued by the leaders of the German Confessional Church to their own churchmen in condemnation of the killing of human beings other than in war. They said in part: "Woe to us and to our nation if, instead of giving honor to God, we exalt human ideas above God and extol the powers of this world as though they were all-powerful. For God says: 'I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. . . . Woe to us and our nation when we make little of the life that God has given, and man, whom God created in his image, is only assessed as a utility; when it is considered right to take life because human beings are considered as of no value, or because they belong to another race; when hatred and cruelty are the order of the day. For God says 'Thou shalt not kill.'"

Whatever hope there is for the future in our relations with Germany lies with men who can speak like that against a temporal standard and for a universal, eternal standard. Finally the whole world must come to it or we never shall have peace. Individually and collectively character must grow from our loyalty to the right as God himself gives us progressively to see it. The time to build that character is not after a war, but during it.

LET US BUILD THE CHURCH!

Coming now to a still more tangible but no less important matter, we should realize that as Christians we can build the church during a war. I could preach a whole sermon on this, but today I shall let a service man put the case before you in a letter. "I am a lifelong resident of New York," he wrote us, "and many times I have attended your church. Now I am in the army, but I am with you in spirit as you worship each Sunday. I would like to tell you a little story of our company. Due to the absence of a chaplain in our unit, the Protestant boys of our company hold a church service among themselves. One of the boys made an altar, and we have a lighted candle on each side as well as fresh cut flowers. It looks very lovely. The boys take part in the service. A Methodist played the organ, a Presbyterian read the responsive reading, another read the Scripture lesson and gave the meditation, and a Baptist gave the prayer. We had a fine attendance. Those present received religious truth; you see the boys have not lost their touch with their religion. Enclosed you will find a money order which I hope you will use for the work of your church. Keep the spiritual home fires burning."

When this man, and others like him from the army, the navy and the air corps come back home, suppose they should find that we had not really continued to build the church while they were fighting far away! I do not think they would say much to us. They would just go away. But I am completely at a loss to know what we could say to them. While they have the weapons of war in their hands, we must take and use the building tools.

Protestant Assignment

By Noble S. Elderkin

WHEN they were about to go ashore, the Pilgrims realized that they could not go without at least a atement of the method by which they proposed to der their common life. They had no charter. They did not have the permission of the king to set up a government on this side of the sea. They had no code of laws which they were under obligation to respect.

So they did what the occasion prompted them to do. They entered into a covenant with one another, pledging themselves to discuss the laws which would be required. They themselves would make their own laws. And once the laws were made, they would obey them. Even if ney had opposed the adoption of a specific law, yet they ould obey it if the majority had come to a decision at it was best for all that the law should be obeyed— the arrangement which had been decided upon was mething which the best interests of the community sked for.

These simple people had come from long lines of en who had been ordered about by rulers, by kings, y overlords, by bishops. Once you get into the way f taking orders it is not easy to think of yourself as t for anything but the taking of orders. So that the ecision made in the cabin of the Mayflower was a omentous decision. It was a decision not only to rmulate the laws under which they should live in eir communities, but to interpret and to administer hose laws.

You have to feel of some importance before you ndertake such an assignment.

THE PROTESTANT REVOLUTION

If it had not been for the Protestant revolution they ould never have dared to think of themselves as ble for such an undertaking. For Protestantism had roclaimed the doctrine of the priesthood of *all* be- evers. Rome had insisted upon the priesthood of a hosen handful. The only way God could get his essage over to humble people, said Rome, was to tell first to the pope and let the pope tell it to those mmediately below him who should tell it to the rank nd file.

It was the business of all to accept what was told hem without asking any questions or entertaining any oubts about the divine origin of the message. No umble person was in any position to "reason why." This is still the position of Rome. You will never ealize how basic and fundamental to a free society s the Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all elievers until you confront yourself with the Roman octrine of the priesthood of the few which is the asic philosophy of totalitarianism.

From Protestantism's delight in this particular doctrine has come modern confidence in the ability of the individual to direct his own affairs, to think his way through his own problems, to act for the good of his community.

You do not need to be told under what a terrific fire this doctrine has been during the past ten years. It is altogether unbelievable that the human beings who have been bluntly informed of their unfitness to handle their own affairs have been willing to go to war to defend the claims of those who scoffed at the notion that human beings could handle their own affairs.

Evidently, the world is running over with people who do not want to think highly of themselves; who are willing to think of themselves as incompetent to run their own affairs, as unfit to arrive at their own decisions, who are willing to be told what they must do, who do not care for a voice or a vote, who do not want to be free, who want to be dictated to.

It is the presence of people who want to be dictated to that makes it possible for dictators to have great followings.

TRAINING FOR FREEDOM

What the free churches within Protestantism are struggling for is a host of people who want to arrive at their own decisions. They are not satisfied to have and listen to a few people who are competent to arrive at decisions and able to enforce acceptance of their decisions.

It is the training of men and women in this feeling of importance and competence which Protestantism has given itself to. It refused to be satisfied with any limiting of this education to a handful. It refused to draw dividing lines, to set up barriers against participation in the knowledge which fitted men for full control. Not all at once did it move over into the full implications of the doctrine. But it set off in a direction which meant that ultimately it would arrive at its destination.

What you observe taking place in the cabin of the Mayflower could not have taken place if Protestantism had not insisted that men could learn to govern themselves, to make laws for the benefit of the whole community, to stand upright, uncringing, in the very presence of God.

This scene in the Mayflower is enough to take your breath away. These assumptions of ability and of right and of propriety do take your breath away. However did men dare to think themselves of such stature! Heretofore bishops and assemblages of bishops and kings and princes had formulated the rules by which the game was to be played. But these Pilgrims, taking firm hold of their Protestantism, were saying in language which was unmistakable that the people themselves were able to formulate the rules by which the game was to be played. This was something new under the sun.

As you read the compact entered into 324 years ago while the passengers of the Mayflower were making ready to land, it does not appear a very impressive

document. They propose to draw up the laws by which they will govern themselves. They propose to obey the laws thus determined upon. That was all. It looks simple enough. But, as we have come to realize, it is not as simple as it looks. If you assumed that the matter could be rested there, you have not assumed enough. The matter would not allow itself to be rested there.

IMPORTANCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

It soon became apparent that if you are going to entrust so much power to an individual, you must make that individual capable of exercising that power. You cannot afford to place such power in the keeping of a person who will think only of himself and only of his own interests. You must have a person who can think of others and who can plan for the welfare of others, a person who can live cooperatively. You must have a person who will be jealous not only for his own rights but jealous for the rights of all people. Which is to say that you cannot have just an ordinary person. An ordinary person cannot be expected to operate so intricate a device as was here envisioned.

Once this was realized, these men out of the Mayflower cabin set to work to fit men for these new assignments. If it was self-government which had been worked out in the cabin of the Mayflower, then men who could govern themselves would have to be produced. Self-government was not something which would flourish of itself. It needed to be cared for. It needed to be cared for by persons who had a high sense of obligation to a difficult assignment, who realized the vital importance of what was being worked out, who realized the importance of being competent for the heavy undertaking, who wanted to be competent, and would not be satisfied with shoddy and indifferent endeavors to carry out the terms of the agreement reached in the cabin of the Mayflower.

An individual, left to himself, might or might not produce the best. The wisest arrangement would be to try to produce a person capable of acting worthily under the new responsibility. The tone and quality of the life of him who was to exercise this power must henceforth be a first consideration. He must be led into a deeper concern for the sort of person he ought to be. He must be anxious to be worthy of the great trust which was now committed to him. Someone else was not going to be responsible for decisions touching his welfare. He himself was going to be responsible. And not only for decisions touching his own welfare, but the welfare of all who lived near him, of all who were identified with him, of all whose interests were identified with his.

WHY THE PURITANS WERE SERIOUS

All this pressure upon their own worthiness, upon the necessity for a high-toned and a high-principled life could not but have its effect upon the individuals who were trying to work out their own salvation. We accuse them of taking themselves too seriously, of being too deadly in earnest, of wearing themselves out in the endeavor to make themselves personally responsible for the common welfare.

We have a way of making slighting remarks abou the narrowing effect of Puritanism, about its clos attention to the details of other lives. We appear t urge that they should not have been so meticulous, s careful, so concerned. We chide them for being to watchful of the behavior of their fellows. What w need to observe is that all this concern was born of th desire to secure the sort of person who could legislat most wisely for the common good. A person of lo personal standards could not be expected to legislat wisely for the common good. A person of cheap an tawdry standards could not be expected to legislat wisely. What they were would be reflected in wha they set up as the common good.

What the Pilgrims said was that if you are goin to grant common persons the right to legislate for th common good, you must see to it that these commo persons are really uncommon persons. They must b good persons, intelligent, fair-minded. They mus know what the best is and how to come by it.

You can see how quickly the Pilgrims were involve in a process of development which would persist i demanding more and more of the individual. For onc you had lifted the level of common life a very littl it would be quite plain that the level of life ought to b lifted a little higher. You could never finish the jo of fitting the person for self-government. Alway there would be something more that could be done t make him fitter for the weighty business of governin himself. And it was this task that the Pilgrims becam excited about. How relentlessly they pursued thi ideal we know. How they spent themselves in tryin to make themselves worthy of the great privilege o governing themselves! How they sacrificed, how the schemed to become more and more worthy!

TAKING THE HARD WAY

It would have been much easier and very muc simpler to have fallen in with the current arrangement and been content to be ordered about by some perso supposedly qualified to issue orders, to allow such person to do what thinking it was necessary to do and to absolve oneself from any responsibility.

The Pilgrim could have concluded that he was person to be ordered about, that he did not have th ability to legislate for himself, that he could not lear to make his own laws. That would have been a simpl way out of his dilemma. But he chose not to take th simple way out. He took the hard way out. Prob ably he did not know that it was the hard way out Probably he never glimpsed a fraction of the troubl he was in for. He could have chosen himself an over lord and agreed to take orders. But he elected to ven ture into a brand new world. He elected to think o himself as capable of self-government.

Looking thus impressively upon himself and his abil ities he saw that he must make himself impressive. I he proposed to rule himself, he had to be a certain sor of person. If he did not happen to be that sort o person then he must make himself that sort of person This was going out of his way to impose burdens upo himself. But even when he began to see what h

had gotten himself into, he did not draw back, as though he regretted the decisions made in the cabin of the Mayflower. As each new demand was made upon him, he accepted it and laid it upon his back.

When it became apparent what an elaborate and extensive program of education was involved he set himself to provide what was obviously required. If schools and colleges and universities were required to help men to govern themselves properly, then there should be all the schools and colleges and universities which might be required. There should be no stinting. And there was no stinting.

EDUCATION TO THE FORE

In these days of a casual attitude toward education—thinking of it as a way into better material fortune—of being unconcerned about what is happening to liberal education, it is not easy for us to understand the frantic determination of our fathers to provide themselves with educational institutions. But they had serious business on their hands. They had to help those who were to take part in government to be capable of taking part in government.

In this one area alone you stand aghast at the reckless provision made by folk who did not have great stores of wealth. You wouldn't think human beings could be led to think so highly of human life, so highly of the privilege of citizenship that they would go to all this trouble to equip it for worthy living.

It was what happened in the cabin of the Mayflower 324 years ago that aroused our Congregational churches to a fervent and passionate devotion to education. It did not just happen that we were willing to make vast sacrifices to provide education for all. It was because we believed that education was one way to create the person who would govern himself worthily.

Every tool which might be employed to make the individual competent our fathers sought out and used. For not only intellectually was the individual to be equipped—he must be helped to the possession of high principles. He must be trained in high standards of conduct. He must realize that there were no areas of his life which could be left unimproved.

This proclamation of the men of the Mayflower was a daring thing—overwhelming in its premises, staggering in the implications involved. The loftiest tribute that had ever been paid to human life, the sincerest confidence that had ever been placed in human life, greatening in its slightest touch, worth all the trouble men were put to to realize the mighty truth lodged in the heart of the conviction!

FREEDOM A TROUBLOUS THING

Nor was this all. The whole problem of freedom was introduced into the affairs of common men. The problem of the disencumbered soul, the problem of the unshackled mind, what life can amount to when it is allowed to go through new doors into new worlds by itself. Freedom is a troublous thing—an exacting thing—stern in its demands. It is easy to take commands, to do what one is told to do, to accept what one is ordered to accept. One has only to observe how the authoritarian religions are flocked to. One's thinking is done for one. One does not question. One takes what is handed one. We marvel at the readiness of Germans and Italians to yield completely and entirely to the rule of a single mind. But we fail to tremble at the power of ecclesiastical institutions which exact

A Pastoral Prayer

By Herbert Beecher Hudnut

OUR FATHER GOD, who rulest the winds and the seas, both seedtime and harvest, and the minds and hearts of men, hear our prayer for our Country.

Grant that the President and all who bear rule over us may be humble in office, strong to resist temptation, farseeing in outreach and decision, just in counsel and endeavor, and empowered by Thee to lead us into the paths of righteousness.

Open our eyes that we may see Thy unfolding purpose in history and know that we may have some share in its fulfillment. Teach us that there is no greatness for our Nation but goodness, and no goodness but through self-sacrifice.

Answer our petition for peace all over the world, so that once again mankind may take up the task of building a united world in which war will be forever displaced. Enable us who serve at home to carry heavy burdens without stumbling, to have clean hands and pure hearts, to live quietly and soberly and to seek first Thy Kingdom.

Help us to hold in grateful memory our fallen sons and comrades who have died that we might live. Through this act of devotion, let us resolve to be worthy of their great sacrifice. Touch our hearts with compassion for the wounded, the suffering, the prisoners released from their chains, and the homeless.

Hear our prayers for those in the Armed Services who have been given respite from warfare. Grant them the blessing of gratitude, a calm determination to live nobly and a safe return to their homes. Strengthen those who must carry on the grim and terrible fighting in other theaters of war where there has come no cessation of hostilities.

We thank Thee that Thy Spirit does direct the affairs of men. We praise Thee for stilling the raging storm in Europe. And we bless Thee for the knowledge that our loved ones, both the living and the dead, are forever safe in Thy keeping.

Lord of the Nations, hold us true to our heritage, help us to defeat the enemies of the Spirit and to build a new world, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

the identical obeisances. We look at the capitulation and are envious. We observe the untroubled calmness of the loyalty and are greatly impressed. Members of the free churches can never be at peace. Always is a new situation arising demanding attention and concern, seeking an answer at our hands, assailing us until we go in search of an answer, refusing to let us rest back until we have found an answer.

It is a world where this procedure is standard that we were introduced into through the action which took place in the cabin of the Mayflower. How grateful we should be for our introduction into this world, for a chance to live our lives in its bracing and vitalizing atmosphere; how eager to make it a real world—a world in which other souls may be privileged to live—where other souls may straighten themselves up and throw back their heads under the impact of the assurance that they have a right to be free, and the fashioners of their own destiny!

It belongs to us to be as diligent as our fathers in the resolution to be worthy of this that has come to us as a way of thrilling and exhilarating life. It belongs to Protestants who know what this freedom means to see that no despite is done to it.

A God Who Talks

A Sermon for Children by Peter H. Pleune

"And God said . . ." Genesis 1:3.

THE BIBLE is a wonderful book. Sometimes when I want to buy a book I am told, "We don't print that book any more." But the Bible is never out of print. There are many reasons for that. And one of the best reasons is that it tells us about a God who talks to us. That is the way the Bible begins. On the first page almost every other sentence begins, "And God said." And that goes on through the book, for the Bible is full of the things that God said. It is really very wonderful to know that God is not a silent God, but one who talks to us.

'A STILL SMALL VOICE'

How does God speak? The Ten Commandments begin, "And God spake all these words saying . . ." I once saw a moving picture called "The Ten Commandments." The men who made the picture tried to make it plain that it was God speaking by showing the scene with the accompaniment of a thunder of drums, and a flash of blinding light, and so with a terrible rumble and roar of the sound effects each fiery word appeared on the screen. I do not imagine it was that way at all when God spoke, for there is another time that the Bible tells of God speaking to Elijah, and it says that there was a big earthquake, and a great fire, and a mighty wind, and that God was not in these but in a still small voice. God is not silent, but neither does he make a big noise when he talks. Sometimes when we want someone to know that we mean a thing very much, we shout it. But God does not do that. He talks as you do when you tell your mother that you love her. You don't shout that. You put your arms around her neck, and you whisper: "Mother, I love you." You say it quickly just because you mean it so much. And that is why God speaks quietly when he talks.

And sometimes he talks without words at all. One of God's prophets, who was a preacher, preached without any words. It may be that you wish your preacher were like that. Jeremiah acted out his sermon because the people did not listen to his words. He was trying to tell the people that if they did not do better God would make things hard for them, and when they would not listen to his words he made a yoke, and put it about his own neck, and walked the streets to show them what God would do to them.

God uses a sign language, too. And his sign language is what he does for us. He talks to us in the sun and the rain and the flowers, in the stars and the meadows and the things that grow for us, in the fire that warms us in the winter and the winds that cool us in the summer. There is a great big word that is used for that. It is the word "Providence," which just means that God is speaking to us in all the ways in which he takes care of us.

That is the way your mother talks to you, in the things she does for you. I remember my mother through the cookies that were ready for me when I came in from play, in the touch of her hand when I was sick, and in the pain in her eyes when I was disobedient. I remember a sigh, a prayer, a smile. I can remember some words, but not many. My mother has been gone for some years, but she still talks to me in that way. And your mother talks to you now, not so much in what she says as in what she *is,* and what she does for you. And that, too, is the way that God talks to you.

GOD'S VOICE—YOUR CONSCIENCE

The Bible says, "God said." Then? Yes, but not just then. He speaks now also, and quietly because he means it so much. You hear him inside of you when you have done something wrong. Your conscience never speaks in noisy sounds. It is God's still small voice, and you hear it sometimes when you would rather not.

And whether it is in words, or sign language, or in things he does for you, it is God talking as he always has talked to men and women, and to boys and girls. One time God said, "Be still and know that I am God." To be still is to listen. If we listen we will find that God speaks today as he always has; that he is talking to us, and that we can understand what he says. And I am quite sure that you will all agree with me that the next thing is to do it.

Sermon Outlines *from* PULPIT Readers

stallments for Peace

Scripture: Matt. 5:12, 43-48; Luke

I. Introduction — Peace is the me desire in the hearts of people lay. They agree with Jesus now: lessed are the peacemakers, for y shall be called the children of od." But in times past prophets of ace were only slightly honored. oodrow Wilson was condemned by altitudes for his peace program. r. Kellogg has a library set apart his memory for his leadership in e peace pact, but all his principles ve been violated. Jesus himself as condemned and crucified between o thieves. However, now one thing certain: we want peace. We want e war to end and the boys to come me. But—the price of peace is stly, if it is to be genuine. Let us ink of the winning of the peace as the "installment plan." Through e centuries some installments have en paid, and more are coming due. What are these installments for peace at must be paid?

II. Body of Sermon — (a) The rst installment has already been id. God gave his son, "The Prince f Peace." That was the start, the ed of a world movement for peace. t was a down payment, and very stly. "On the cross he gave . . ." esus, by his sacrifice, gave the incenve for peace; he created the ideal nd the desire for peace. And Jesus id it so well that now we are urgent bout wanting peace.

(b) The second payment has now ome due and is partly paid. The ations have said, "Let us give our ons for protection." These sons have een our "policemen" to stop vioence and injustice, to safeguard the eople. We hope that our soldiers re doing exactly that! We hope that ur armed forces are only the price eing paid for police protection as a neans to peace.

(c) The third installment for peace omes soon after the second; in fact, efore one is paid the next is due. Righting the wrong, correcting the vil is the next price to pay. Justice coming to be a big word today. We must have justice if we expect ver to have durable peace—and we now it. "What doth the Lord reuire of thee but to do justly, love nercy and walk humbly with thy God?" How many Japanese, good American citizens, have been unjustly reated since the war began! Negroes ave for long been scorned and misreated as inferiors—also in many laces, Jews. And what about Germany? Will the policing forces act vith justice and humanity and mercy toward the people of Germany? If not, the last state of things will be worse than the first.

(d) The next installment for peace is compassion for a needy world. We are living in a period in which Good Samaritans have abundant opportunity for service. Who is my neighbor? Read Jesus' story of the "certain man" who "went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves . . ." And now, two thousand years later, this drama is to be repeated on a world-wide scale. Millions of people in Poland and France and Belgium and Holland and Norway have fallen among thieves who have stripped them of food and clothing, and have bombed them, leaving them half-dead. And a great cry goes up to God and to the world, calling: "Food, food, food for our babies—food to save our children!"

III. Conclusion — The great call to America, which is relatively untouched by the ravages of war, is to feed and clothe the needy world. Let us not complain because rationing must still hold—perhaps for a long time. A determined effort on our part to take care of these great and increasing needs is certainly a necessary installment to be paid for "peace on earth, good will among men." There can be no peace while the peoples are hungry or without protection. Christians, above all, will certainly do their best to make this necessary payment on world peace—and with the greatest efficiency possible. This total job Christ's followers will back to the limit. "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God."

(Paul Graham, Methodist Church, Lemont, Illinois)

The True American

By Harold W. Ruopp

Some of us are Americans by birth; some of us are Americans by adoption. But whichever we are, we say with justifiable pride, "I am an American." And that means something!

But what does it mean? At least this:

An American is one who believes in the right of men and women of whatever creed, class, color or ancestry, to live as human beings with the dignity becoming children of God.

An American is one who believes in the right to be free, free not only *from* crushing coercions and dictatorships and regimentation, but free *for* that way of life where men may think and speak as they choose and worship God as they see fit.

An American is one who believes in the right to vote, the right to work, the right to learn, the right to live—and what is equally important, the right to be different; for he knows that if we ever lose the right to be different, we lose the right to be free.

An American is one who believes in democracy not only for himself but for *all* his fellow Americans, and by democracy he means not simply the rule of the majority but the rights of minorities; and those minorities have rights, not because they are minorities, but because they are human beings.

An American is one who believes in the responsibility of privilege. What he asks for himself, he is willing to grant to others; what he demands from others, he is willing to give himself. His creed is not alone, "Live and let live," but, "Live and help live."

An American is one who acts from faith in others, not fear of others; from understanding, not prejudice; from good will, not hatred. To bigotry he gives no sanction; to intolerance no support.

The only question the True American ever asks is not, Are you a Protestant or Catholic, Gentile or Jew, white or colored? but, Are you an American? If you are, then you are my brother, for I am an American too.

"America, America, God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea."

A Decade of 'Pulpit' Texts

By Hugh Thomson Kerr, Jr.

ALTHOUGH books on preaching appear with quiet regularity together with numerous discussions of theological trends, very little has been attempted by way of determining the characteristics of contemporary American preaching. We are constantly being told that there is too much preaching on *this* and not enough emphasis on *that,* but very few have taken the trouble to ascertain with any degree of accuracy just what present-day preaching is. To do so, of course, would require a deliberate and extended analysis of all kinds of sermons from various points of view. This brief survey makes no such pretension; it is a sort of footnote to such a project which perhaps some enterprising person will soon undertake. That such a comprehensive review would be valuable as an indication of the actual state of contemporary American preaching goes without saying; what this footnote attempts is something more modest, namely, a survey of sermon texts which have appeared in the *Pulpit* over a ten-year period, the decade from January 1935 to December 1944.

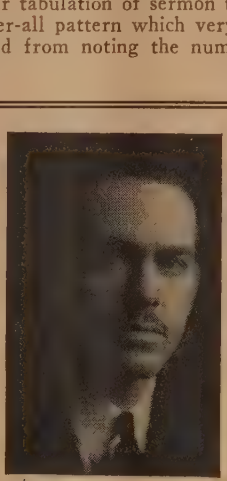
● *A Representative Survey*

The survey was made on the basis of more than 1,500 sermons, as well as the texts from the features known as "Titles and Texts" and "Sermon Outlines from Pulpit Readers." It was felt that the inclusion of these latter items would make the survey more representative and would help to compensate somewhat for conscious or unconscious editorial selection. The tabulation which was made took account of the books of the Bible from which texts were drawn, so that, in a sense, this is a survey not so much of specific texts as of the biblical books from which texts were taken.

Obviously such an analysis has the weaknesses of all statistical averages. No attempt, for example, was made to estimate the theological or even homiletical interpretation of the texts used, since this would have involved a much more elaborate examination. Furthermore, as we all know, a text is often no more than a springboard or point of departure, and the traditional practice of expository preaching is not so commonplace today as it was some years ago—for better or for worse. As a matter of fact, as we shall note, many sermons do not make use of a text at all, and in some instances while a text or biblical passage may be presupposed the sermon itself is not strictly biblical or exegetical. In spite of its many limitations, however, such an analysis as this does indicate certain interesting characteristics of contemporary American preaching. For what these are worth, by way of reflection and judgment, there need not be unanimity, but *Pulpit* readers may be interested in the following observations.

● *The Biblical Pattern*

The most interesting result of this ten-year tabulation of sermon texts is the over-all pattern which very early emerged from noting the number of



Hugh T. Kerr, Jr.

times each book of the Bible contributed a sermon text. It is quite clear that the New Testament is more often used in preaching than the Old Testament; the ratio is two to one! Within the New Testament, moreover, it is evident that the Gospels definitely predominate. The most popular book of the Bible, so far as preaching is concerned, is the Gospel of Matthew which far outranks every other book. Next in order of importance in the New Testament are John and Luke, in that order, with Mark, for some curious reason, lagging considerably to the rear. Apart from the Gospels, the most frequently used New Testament books are: Romans, Acts, I and II Corinthians, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the Old Testament, Psalms bears the same relation to the rest of the Old Testament as Matthew bears to th New Testament. The next mo quoted Old Testament book is Isaia with Jeremiah a poor runner-u Taking the Bible as a whole, th most quoted books from which 50 more texts were taken during th ten-year period show the followin sequence: Matthew, John, Psalm Luke, Romans, Isaiah, Acts, Mar Hebrews, I Corinthians, II Cori thians.

At the other end of the scale the are a number of books from whi fewer than ten texts were taken, su as: Leviticus, Numbers, II Samu I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Neh miah, Esther, Lamentations, Jo Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, N hum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Hagg Zechariah, Malachi, I Thessalonian Titus, Philemon, II Peter, II Joh III John, Jude. The following boo did not contribute a single text ov the ten-year period examined: Rut Ezra, Song of Solomon, II Thess lonians.

One or two more statistics may given. More than 200 sermons o of the 1,500 had no texts at a Occasionally a sermon has a no biblical text; there were two or thr references to Ecclesiasticus and som times a line of poetry or a quotati of some sort. It is interesting to s that nearly 200 sermons make use the modern versions and translation Moffatt is well out in front, wi Goodspeed and Weymouth in secon and third places. Four sermons too occasion to use the recent translati of the New Testament into Bas English.

● *New Testament Take Strong Lea*

It may be observed that the patte which these statistics suggest, e pecially the predominance of the Ne Testament over the Old Testame and the outstanding use made of th Gospel of Matthew, became appare very early in the survey. This woul seem to indicate that this pattern a definite characteristic of conten porary American preaching and n merely an inference from statistic averages. That is to say, the patte would not have been radically diffe ent had more sermons been examine for the experts who conduct ou public opinion polls testify that it unnecessary to continue samplin opinion after a definite pattern b comes apparent. One further ite which confirms this is the fact tha

similar survey of British preaching sulted in the same general trends hich have already been noted in this ticle.

● *The Gospel Emphasis*

It is possible to determine on the sis of these statistics a dominant eaching motif, and, if so, what does mean? One must be careful not make unwarranted inferences, but seems clear beyond dispute that ere is a definite pattern in the eacher's use of the Bible. Put iefly, contemporary preaching is sed largely on the Gospels, the pri- ary Pauline epistles, the Psalms, d Isaiah. Concerning this we may ake three reflections: (1) On the rface, at least, it would seem that ntemporary preaching is putting rst things first. There would be few ho would decry the fact that the ew Testament outpoints the Old estament, or that the Gospels are ell and away the most preached- om books in the Bible, or that aul's more profound epistles are vored. The emphasis here, we be- eve, is right and a healthy sign. It eans that amid all our differences, d there are many, our preachers e agreed upon the fundamental im- ortance of essential Christianity.

(2) If we take into account the ajor Old Testament preferences, salms and Isaiah, the dominant ew Testament emphasis is given dded meaning; for these two books re traditionally known as, in the ne case, the testimony of personal eligious experience and, in the other, ne message of the "evangelical rophet." That is to say, there ap- ears to be some underlying reason r motif for this preaching pattern, hether it be designated essential hristianity, personal religious faith, r simply the Christian life.

● *Matthew's Gospel as Source of Texts*

(3) Although the main pattern is ery simple and uncomplicated, a uestion arises as to the clear pre- ominance of Matthew's Gospel. Vhy this rather than one of the thers? Does Matthew have an ad- antage because it is the first of the Gospels and the first book of the Jew Testament? Is it quoted so ften because it contains the most xtended section on the Sermon on ne Mount? This would seem to be ne reason, though it is not evident iat Matthew's popularity is based ntirely upon this particular section. ome would perhaps hasten to con- lude that Matthew's predominance ecause of the Sermon on the Mount ows the "liberal" emphasis in mod- rn preaching since Matthew's con- ern for the uninterrupted "Sermon" often taken as an attempt to sup- plant the old Mosaic Law with the new Law of Love. But this would be a hasty judgment and not warranted by the facts. For example, if there is a clearly defined liberal theological trend, then how account for the neglect of Mark's Gospel which is usually regarded as the most historical and, therefore, the least theological? The answer to these questions must await a more detailed study of the sermons themselves.

● *Some Striking Omissions*

The mention of Mark suggests another general observation, namely, what are the striking omissions in this decade of preaching? Mark has already been noted; why, with all the critical importance of this earliest Gospel, Mark should have such a poor showing in relation to the other Gospels is one of the mysteries of this survey. Is interest in the historical Jesus waning? Is Mark too curtailed and matter of fact for preaching? Is there a tendency to ignore the basic features of the gospel in an effort to pick out what is peculiar or even trivial? Or have we begun to see that Mark, for all its brevity and historical concern, is after all not so much a biography but a veritable theological apologetic?

The most obvious negligence, however, if that is the right word, is the Old Testament as a whole and the sections on history and prophecy in particular. There may be reasons enough for the relative neglect of the historical books, but it is hard to account for the avoidance of some of the prophets. For example, Amos—long the treasured exponent of social justice, surely one of our contemporary interests—contributed only six texts over the ten-year period (Ezekiel provided 15, Hosea 13, Joel 3, Micah 7)! Professor G. Ernest Wright in his book, *The Challenge of Israel's Faith* (1944), gives further evidence of the strange neglect of Old Testament prophets. He tells of a survey which was made of the use of eighth-century prophets in published sermons from 1914 to 1942. "Certainly," he says, "Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah present a great core of the central teaching of Israel to the world. Yet, in the 1,845 sermons surveyed, only 74 contained enough material to be used in the analysis" (p. 100).

● *Relation of the Testaments*

One of the reasons for this attitude, or lack of attitude, toward the Old Testament may very well be the result of Old Testament textual and critical studies in recent years. The historical critical approach to the Old Testament, particularly in the case of history and prophecy, has been of great value in showing the actual historical situations within which political, national and religious leaders arose and to which the prophets specifically addressed themselves. As was to be expected, of course, this modern approach superseded the older allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament. But in this transition, something of the unity of biblical revelation has been lost so that we are witnessing today a kind of modern Marcionism which distinguishes in a radical way between the Christian revelation contained in the New Testament and the incomplete historical preparation of the Old Testament. The view of many today reflects the opinion of Schleiermacher that the Old Testament, if printed at all, should be placed as a historical appendix after the New Testament! There are many signs, and this survey of texts is one, that we stand very much in need of a fresh interpretation of the relation between the Testaments if we are to retain the Old Testament as anything more than a historical introduction to the New Testament.

That we are facing up to this question is evidenced by the increasing number of books on Old Testament theology that are appearing in this country and abroad. It remains to be seen what effect upon preaching there will be from such writers as W. J. Pythian-Adams, editor of the *Church Quarterly Review,* A. G. Hebert *(The Throne of David,* 1941), G. E. Phillips *(The Old Testament in the World Church,* 1942), and the two volumes of W. Vischer of Basle *(Das Christuszeugnis des Alten Testament,* 1936, 1944). Some will feel that these attempts to revive the theology of allegorical and mystical exegesis is a backward step; but it seems clear that modern historical criticism, on the other hand, has not resulted in a more profound theological interpretation of the Old Testament and its place within the redemptive plan of God.

● *How to Check This Survey*

It would be interesting to know—and this would be the only means of checking the implications of these statistics—to what extent this survey represents the preaching of both urban and rural ministers. One can believe that it would be revealing for preachers now and again to make an inventory of their texts in order to see where their preaching emphases have fallen. It would be quite natural to find that some books and portions of the Bible are preferred above others; Jesus himself seemed to prefer some books more than others when he quoted from the Old Testament; but the discovery of the continued avoidance of certain books of the Bible in today's preaching may come as a warning, a rebuke, and a challenge.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

FROM 1904 to 1919 REV. EDWARD L. PARSONS was rector of St. Mark's Church, Berkeley, Calif. He was consecrated bishop coadjutor of California in 1919 and bishop of California in 1924. He retired four years ago. Bishop Parsons has been a leader in the activities of the American Civil Liberties Union and the League for Industrial Democracy; also as a member of his church's Commission on Approaches to Unity.

REV. EDGAR DEWITT JONES *has been minister of* Central Woodward Christian Church, Detroit, Mich., since 1920, having served First Christian Church, Bloomington, Ill., from 1906 to 1920. He was president of the Federal Council of Churches 1937-38. Among his many books are *This Great Business of Preaching, American Preachers of Today, Lords of Speech* and *A Man Stood Up to Preach.*

REV. WILLIAM H. DENNEY *was for a number of* years on the faculty of Rollins College and is now minister of the Church of the Covenant, Boston, which is a merger of the old Central Congregational and First Presbyterian churches of that city.

A graduate of Harvard and of Union Theological Seminary, REV. NORRIS L. TIBBETTS pursued studies also in the divinity school of the University of Chicago. He was minister of the Hyde Park Baptist Church, Chicago 1923-42, and has been one of the ministers of Riverside Church, New York, during the past three years.

REV. NOBLE S. ELDERKIN *has held pastorates in* Ogden, Utah, Lawrence, Kan., Oak Park, Ill., and Duluth, Minn., and since 1930 has ministered at First Congregational Church, Akron, Ohio. He has been chairman of the advisory board of Chicago Theological Seminary since 1936, and has been a leader in the activities of the Council for Social Action of Congregational Churches for several years. Mr. Elderkin preached the sermon in this issue on Mayflower Compact Sunday, November 19, 1944.

REV. HERBERT B. HUDNUT *is minister of Wood*ward Avenue Presbyterian Church, Detroit, Mich.

REV. PETER H. PLEUNE *is minister of the Highland* Presbyterian Church, Louisville, Ky.

REV. HUGH THOMSON KERR, JR., *is associate pro*fessor of systematic theology at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Correction: By a printers' error the Pastoral Prayer in the May issue was credited to King D. Beach. It was written and submitted by Herbert W. Hahn of White Plains, N .Y.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

OTIS MOORE, Methodist Community Church, Kenilworth, N. J. "Militant Neutrality." Josh. 5:13, 14—"Behold there stood a man with a sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua said unto him, Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come."

MARCUS LINDSAY, First Presbyterian, Boise, Ida. "The Spiritual Basis for Peace." Psalm 11:3—"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

FRED E. FOX, First Methodist, Littleton, N. H. "The Landmarks of Our Fathers." Prov. 22:28—"Remove not the ancient landmarks, which thy fathers have set."

EVAN H. BERGWALL, Lexington Ave. Methodist, New York. "Dangerous Living." James 4:17—"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

B. ROY BROWN, First Methodist, Schaller, Ia. "Going Beyond Knowing." John 13:17—"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

. . . . . .

Title of sermon

. . . . . .

Text used (write out the text)

. . . . . .

Name of minister

. . . . . .

Name of church

. . . . . .

Address

HENRY H. SCHOOLEY, Church of the Mediator, Providence, R. I. "The Unity of Humanity." Eph. 4:13—"Till we all come in the unity of the faith . . ."

R. DALE LECOUNT, Sixth Ave. Presbyterian, Birmingham, Ala. "Learning How to Be Angry." Eph. 4:26—"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down on your wrath."

JAMES C. PERKINS, First Congregational, Niagara Falls, N. Y. "How Shall We Prepare for Peace?" Eph. 6:15—"And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

J. DONELSON JONES, Methodist, Lebanon, Ky. "Keys of the Kingdom." Matt. 25:40—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

FRANCIS M. HALL, Cleveland, O. "The Gospel Must Be Rediscovered." 2 Cor. 13:5—"Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith."

HAROLD C. DEWINDT, West Park Presbyterian, New York. "God's Who's Who." Rev. 21:27—"They which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

ROBERT H. STEPHENS, First Presbyterian, Beaver Falls, Pa. "Indispensable Us." Heb. 11:40—"That they without us should not be made perfect."

W. JOHN PARKER, First Christian, Paducah, Ky. "The Blessed Darkness." Matt. 5:3, 4—"Blessed are the poor in spirit. . .. Blessed are the mourners, for they shall be comforted."

FRANCIS C. ELLIS, First Congregational, Riverside, Cal. "The Master's Call to Heroism." Mark 6:50—"Take courage; it is I. Do not be afraid." (Goodspeed)

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

FOR ME, the important event of this month is not any particular occurrence. Rather it is the *mood* which has settled down upon the spirit of e nation following the great events of last month d this. The war in Europe has ended. The war against Japan is being intensified and victory seems assured. From the San Francisco conference there is emerging the charter of a new world ganization. By all precedents, the mood of this onth should be one of high exultation and hope-lness. But our people are not exultant, and their pes are shadowed with grave anxiety. The war s not produced the fruits promised by those who d us into it. Indeed, it seems to have eventuated in e very kind of world which our people were led to lieve their fighting would destroy and prevent. By e vast sacrifices of our sons and our resources we ve enabled Stalin to possess everything that Hitler anted. He has seized his spoils and proposes to hold d probably to add to them by essentially the same ethods which Hitler intended to use. He has behaved San Francisco in a manner which has cast a pall er the new league. Russia does not feel the need of a orld organization. Great Britain does. And now, last, the United States does also. This feeling of r national dependence, of our having to deal with nother power whose purposes and potential resources sure her of ultimate ascendancy among the nations, a new experience for us. Add to this disillusion of ctory the vast responsibility which the war has laid our lap for the control of Germany and the recovery Europe. Add also the enormous task that awaits s in Japan and Asia after our victory in the Pacific. hen add the precarious prospect with which our omestic economy and our national morale face the ture. Is it strange that we cannot celebrate our ctory with exultation? America is not pessimistic. ut her thoughtful people are profoundly solemn.

The Mood of the Month

The Book of the Month

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH, *by thirteen writers. Willett, Clark & Company. Paper bound, 75 cents.*

IN WHAT PATTERN of thought does your denomination conceive the nature of the Christian church? A committee of American theologians orking under the auspices of the World Council of hurches has been meeting periodically for several ears to study the nature of the church. The personnel f this group represented the various denominations of is country. Such a question as I have formulated bove led to the writing of a series of papers on each enomination's conception of the church by a repre-ntative of that denomination. These papers constitute ne present book of 124 pages. This book ought to e in the hands of every church leader. As our sectarian divisions were rooted chiefly in divergent conceptions of the nature of the church, so the whole problem of Christian unity comes to focus here. Each chapter explains how the writer's denomination has historically conceived the Christian church, and perhaps does still conceive it. Following are the contributors: George W. Richards (Evangelical and Reformed), Eric H. Wahlstrom (Lutheran), Walter M. Horton (Congregational), Richard Davidson (United Church of Canada), W. E. Garrison (Disciples), W. O. Carver (Baptist), W. W. Slabaugh (Brethren), Henry J. Cadbury (Friends), Leicester C. Lewis (Anglican), F. W. Loetscher (Presbyterian), H. F. Rall (Methodist).

A Thought for the Month

DURING the many years since I was pastor of a church I have listened to a great many sermons—and with profit to my soul. But one impression made upon me is that the sermons generally deal with subjects that are too thin. Most preachers seem to select for their subject some fragment of Christian truth; they break off a tiny twig from the tree of life—it may be a scripture text or an ethical idea—and make their sermon out of that. I long for an interpretation of the great themes of the Christian faith. If I were a pastor again I believe I would order my preaching so as to cover every year the whole gamut of the major themes of the gospel. I believe I would set aside thirty-six Sundays—three each month—and definitely assign to each Sunday one of the great structural themes of our faith. This would leave sixteen Sundays open for the treatment of timely or other less full-bodied subjects. I would publish in a dignified folder the entire program of subjects and dates. I would establish this program, not for one year only, but for my entire ministry, repeating the cycle year after year, subject to such revision of topics as experience and deeper study might suggest. The sermons could, of course, be new with each return of the cycle, but I imagine the congregation would desire to hear a particularly *good* sermon more than once. What would these subjects be? I want the Pulpit readers to help me make up a list. I have already set down twenty-four, but I shall disclose only four: God, Christ, the Church, the Bible. If my suggestion kindles your imagination I would be glad to have you submit a year's calendar with the thirty-six subjects you would think worthy. I may be able to comment in the Pulpit on the results! In any case, the exercise will be profitable, as I have already found out for myself. And you may find that you have struck a rich vein of gold.

If I Were a Pastor Again!

Charles Clayton Morrison

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Thomas Curtis Clark
Compiler

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